

Truman's Memoir on Espionage

by THOMAS E. SCHOLSKY

PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN, in an off-the-cuff interview, took the position that he abhors spying and would have nothing to do with it. It said that he had an airplane that could go to enormous heights and that he had consulted Secretary of State Dean Acheson and that between them they agreed not to use the high-flying plane for spying. The former President said nothing about having a camera to take the kind of pictures a modern camera can take from a high-flying plane or from a satellite.

President Truman's memory may be hazy on this subject because he was President when the CIA was organized and the CIA exists for the purpose of spying (gathering intelligence), evaluating the intelligence, correlating it. It also engages in counter-espionage. So secret are the operations of the CIA that its total budget is hidden even from the eyes of Congress.

The United States has, of course, always had intelligence-gathering agencies. The State Department received reports from ambassadors, ministers and consuls. The Army had its G-2 which watched all countries, particularly objective enemies. Navy intelligence was always regarded as a very able arm of the Government. We did not go in, for the type of espionage that Czarist Russia had in the Okhrana or that the British produced in various branches of government until World War II when General William Donovan created the OSS.

The OSS was the first attempt in the United States to establish a professional espionage corps. General Donovan started from scratch, recruiting various personalities to do work for which none of them were particularly trained. Some of them seemed to be suitable; others were workshams for this work and had to be weeded out. Some were Communists and were undoubtedly Russian plants. Nevertheless, General Donovan worked on his own, took little advice from other agencies, particularly from the FBI, which he ignored altogether.

When the war was over, the OSS continued to function but was falling apart. In 1947, when Harry Truman was President, the CIA was established by Act of Congress to take the place of the OSS and Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, a brilliant naval officer, was appointed to head it.

Hillenkoetter did the organization work but returned to the Navy and General Walter B. Smith took over. Smith was replaced by Allen Dulles, brother of John Foster Dulles, a lawyer and experienced in intelligence work, particularly in Germany. Allen Dulles is presently the Director of the CIA.

THERE HAD TO BE a division of functions between the CIA and the FBI, which also was engaged in overseas intelligence. It was originally worked out that the FBI is in charge of investigations in the United States while the CIA is in charge outside of the United States. There must be areas where their programs overlap but there have been no overt conflicts between the two agencies.

President Truman therefore cannot say that he disapproves of spying because it was in his Administration that our most important spying organization was established by an Act of Congress which he signed. The year, to repeat, was 1947.

In this connection, it must be noted that the record will show that the U-2 which the Russians brought down was operated neither by the Air Force nor the CIA. It was operated by a private company for which the pilot, Francis Gary Powers, worked. It is not unusual for espionage organizations to contract with outside firms to do particular jobs.

In fact, there are some such groups that rent themselves out for hire and some are double-agents working for both sides. They are paid by both sides and serve a special purpose. Usually such contracting groups are abandoned when they become problems. A real professional might commit suicide if caught, but he will surely destroy all documents. When he neither destroys documents nor himself, his conduct becomes beclouded by suspicion.

Espionage is now a profession. Every nation does it and only the cleverest and the most competent persons are used for it. A clown or a blabber-mouth cannot be used for anything at all. A homosexual is a menace because he is subject to blackmail. Very often prostitutes and such women are employed because they are useful. The professional is not the most moral. As long as there is war there will be espionage.